2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
SM3 Caingang SM3
Aweikoma



627 an inevitable retaliation in the slaughter of men, women, and children by Kumbló's family. They stole upon a camp late at night, intending to kill the sleepers with clubs, but suddenly they remembered that the captured children were among them and that in the darkness they might be killed. So they waited until someone rose and stepped out of a house. When his cries aroused the camp the attacking party pursued each individual, killing them, men, women and children, like cornered rats. Those who escaped wandered about, sick and half starved, until they at last met with other members of their family. Since Kumbló's half-brother Wanyekí[5] had by this time become firmly bound to the children of Vomblé and Kanggúin, it did not seem strange to them that they should ask him to go in pursuit of his brother and kill him. Because of some trifling quarrel, however, Wanyekí never undertook the massacre, and before long he died. When his sons grew to manhood their relationship with their father's brother's family had become so obscured that they regarded them as "different people." Kumbló and his children were, to them, simply the murderers of members of their family, and they nursed a desire to kill them all until at last they pursued and slaughtered them. Kumbló and a few of his group escaped, but soon afterward the Brazilians killed Kumbló and the rest of his family, so that their extermination was complete.

Before this happened Patklé's entire line was annihilated, and the story of this massacre, which took place about 1885, is full of refinements of treachery and dissimulation. As the years passed the grandsons of Vomblé, Kanggúin and Mumbégn grew to manhood. There had been a series of intermarriages between the children of Patklé and the grandchildren of his ancient enemy Vomblé, who was now long dead. But Patklé never trusted his in-laws and was forever wandering away and returning. At last Kanyahé,[6] a son of Vomblé, who still remembered the murder of Nduichá, the wounding of his own father, and the whole series of murders and counter murders that had followed them, resolved to kill Patklé and his line. The fact that two of Patklé's daughters were his wives did not deter him. The killing was to be done in traditional Kaingáng style: they were to be invited to a festa, made to drink, and then slaughtered. Although the 627 Kaingáng associate festas with quarreling and murder they never refused 504 an invitation to one even though they knew their lives were in danger. One 579 might imagine that at a festa where large sections of the tribe come together to enjoy themselves the bonds of kinship would be renewed and strengthened and old attachments of man for man would draw new warmth from the general good feeling.

Although this was true of some Kaingáng festas they were as often the

[5] See Genealogy I.

[6] Died of old age shortly before the Kaingáng came to the reservation.

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
SM3 Caingang SM3
Aweikoma



scene of violent quarreling and disruption as they were of friendliness and solidarity. The men and women got drunk, and the men boasted to their children of their invulnerability and their deeds of blood. The men "told their *swikeyé*," walking about, shaking their clubs or lances, slashing at the air, crying out the deeds they had done and the murders they would yet commit. As the beer and excitement mounted to their heads they turned on their neighbors and quarreled with them because they suspected them of adultery with their wives or because they themselves had had affairs with their neighbors' wives and themselves felt suspected and hated. Courage, daring, suspicion and ferocity were screwed to the sticking-point, and even among friends the atmosphere might become so charged with conflict that half the men would engage in brawls. Kaingáng folklore abounds in tales of festa massacres, and the expression, "Let us make beer for him," has such a sinister connotation that it needs no explanation.

Kanyahé decided to "make beer for Patklé" and his family and sent one of his nephews to invite them. Kanyahé and his group were afraid of Patklé, for his history gave them no reason to trust him. The statement of one of Patklé's daughters made after the death of her father and brothers, that her father wanted to kill Kanyahé's group, showed that Kanyahé had good grounds for fear. With the background of mutual distrust of the characters in this drama, we are in a position to understand their hypocritical behavior.

Kuthúgn [Thunder Storm] came to invite the group of Patklé, and when Yuplú, Patklé's son, saw him, he said, "Who is it?"

*K.* "It is I!"

*Y.* "Have you still the name I once knew you by?"

*K.* "Yes."

*Y.* "Is it really, then, the truth?"

*K.* "Yes, it is I."

Then Yuplú caressed Kuthúgn—the very token by which the Kaingáng understand security.

*Y.* "I have been thinking about you. Whenever someone died I thought of you. Did you think about seeing me, too?"

*K.* "Yes. I do just that. I have remembered you. I had almost forgotten you, and now, at last, I see you."

Then Yuplú called his wife and told her to give meat to Kuthúgn, a second token of security.

*Y.* "Kuthúgn, eat this and then talk with me."

When Kuthúgn had eaten, proving by his acceptance of the food that there was no evil in his mind, Yuplú spoke to him again. "Kuthúgn, where is your dog?" Kuthúgn had had a dog that was a fine tapir hunter, and he and Yuplú had hunted together with it.

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
SM3 Caingang SM3
Aweikoma



killed you. When they killed you, I wandered around suffering, but you come to call me!" When the ghost-soul at last went away, she was "all green. She stood there without saying anything. He [her husband] said to her, 'Why are you green?' But she said nothing. She sat down holding on to a post. Then he asked if she was sick—if she had a pain in the belly. But she did not talk. Wanenggló [her husband] asked her whether she had seen a ghost-soul. Probably she saw a ghost-soul. But she did not say anything." Like vendetta enemies, the ghost-souls are "other things"—it is the only category the Kaingáng have for those who dwell outside the limits of the extended families—and for people in this category they know only one emotion, fear-anger.

When the Kaingáng are drunk, their malevolent and fearsome impulses rise to the surface, and the memory of death plays its part in this. Festa time, when the beer troughs are brimming with the steaming, sourish, honey beer, is a special occasion for remembering the dead. It is also the occasion when recollections of adultery unpunished or of slights unrequited surge into consciousness. While some dance, sing, or brawl, others sit around the edge of the dance circle with their heads in their hands and tears streaming down their faces, and their sobs and high rhythmic keening mingle with the noise of quarreling and disordered singing. When they have done with their hour or so of weeping, they rise and fill their baskets or gourds with beer and join in the festa. No recollection of the dead can occur without unleashing fear, and fear cannot be liberated without the eruption of anger, so the memory of the dead only adds to the disruptive forces that are set in motion by the beer. The more one knows about the Kaingáng, the more one is struck by the extent to which the very roots of their being have been undermined and torn by impulses to violence. This is all the more amazing when we remember what affectionate people they seem to be—how much they love to multiply a hundredfold all kinds of personal attachments. Nevertheless, when drunkenness uncovers the Kaingáng personality, it does not bubble over in rivulets of tenderness, but pours out in torrents of violence. The only outlet is murder, and that is why festas, if not actually the scene of murders, used to be almost always the forerunners of raids on the Brazilians or on vendetta enemies. The Kaingáng themselves understand, in a way, what the festa meant to them, for they say, "We had festas in order to go to attack the Brazilians." Of course not every festa is characterized by violence, but many are.[3]

[3] Although the Kaingáng hold an old-time beer festa at my request the aboriginal beer troughs have been superseded by jugs of sugar cane whiskey, and the monotonous singing by the music of an accordion played by a white man. These changes, however, have not curbed the essential temper of the Indians, and fights still occur at festas.